

# **SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING**

## **MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2016**

**As Approved February 29, 2016**

**Present:** Jeff Squire, Chair (arrived at 6:30 p.m.); Mark Cavanaugh, Vice-Chair; Helen Fantini, Clerk; Joan Rosner, Member (arrived at 6:06 p.m.); Melissa O'Brien, Member; and Richard Harris, Town Planner

Mr. Cavanaugh called the meeting into session at 6:01 p.m.

### **1. PUBLIC FORUM: Emergency Management Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Jamie Caplan of Jamie Caplan Consulting LLC utilized a power point presentation to review the background on the Natural Hazard Mitigation planning process, its purposes, and status. This plan, once approved by the State and the Federal government and adopted locally, will make the community eligible for Natural Mitigation grants for the next 5 years. She reviewed the work of the advisory committee which has been assisting her in this effort.

(Ms. Rosner arrived at 6:06 p.m.)

Jamie Caplan reviewed the list of natural hazards and critical facilities which the committee had identified. She noted that the committee is working on mitigation strategies.

There was discussion as to the variety of hazards addressed in the plan and the various "critical" facilities. A question was asked about planning for non-natural caused disasters. Jamie Caplan stated that is addressed in other emergency preparedness planning but this plan focuses on mitigation of natural disasters.

In terms of the planning process, Jamie Caplan noted the committee will have 5 meetings to prepare the plan. There will be two public forums including this one tonight. The second forum will be before the Selectboard on March 8, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked if there were any further questions or comments. There being none, Mr. Cavanaugh closed the forum.

### **2. Minutes**

#### *a. January 25, 2016 Planning Board meeting minutes*

Mr. Harris referenced the draft minutes which he distributed. The Board members reviewed the draft minutes.

**Motion** - Ms. Rosner moved and Ms. Fantini seconded the motion to approve the January 25, 2016 Planning Board Meeting minutes as submitted. The Board voted **Four (4)** out of **Four (4)** members present in favor of the motion.

- b. *January 25, 2016 Planning Board Public Hearing (27 Bardwell Street) minutes*  
Mr. Harris referenced the draft minutes which he distributed. The Board members reviewed the draft minutes.

**Motion** - Ms. Rosner moved and Ms. O'Brien seconded the motion to approve the January 25, 2016 Planning Board Public Hearing (27 Bardwell Street Special Permit) minutes as submitted. The Board voted **Four (4)** out of **Four (4)** members present in favor of the motion.

**3. Bills and Correspondence**

Mr. Harris referenced the list of correspondence. He stated that there were no bills ready for payment at this time.

**4. MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW: Proposed Performance Center/Classroom/Office building for Berkshire Hills Music Academy. Property Location: 48 Woodbridge Street (Assessor's Map Number #52 - Parcel #180).**

Mr. Harris stated that there is also a Stormwater Management Permit application associated with this project. However, Mr. Harris failed to get the notice of a public hearing published for tonight. Therefore, he stated that he thought it would be helpful to the Board and the applicant for the Board to begin reviewing the Site Plan tonight so that if there were issues with the Site Plan, they could be addressed in time to have the plan revised before the Stormwater Management Permit application's public hearing on February 29<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Fantini noted that she knows Derek Noble, the project architect. However, she stated that she is not working with him on any projects and there is not any conflict of interest.

Derek Noble, architect with Steffian Bradley, Architects representing the applicant, reviewed the project location, building floor plan, and building elevations using a copy of the plans submitted for the Board's review. He described the building's layout, purpose, use areas and noted there would be a paved connection between the existing building and the proposed building. This paved connection will enhance the access for the students and serve as a benefit for emergency response.

(Mr. Squire arrived at 6:30 p.m.)

Chris Tait, engineer with Doucet & Associates representing the applicant, reviewed the site and site plan from an engineering perspective. He reviewed the parking and driveway details noting the number of parking spaces proposed to be added relative to the number of staff and the uses. While the facility has 70 staff persons, only 30 are on site at any one time. A portion of the parking, particularly for the proposed performance facility will remain grass. The proposed drive will be at a 5% grade and will largely follow an older gravel drive which runs through the woods.

Derek Noble, noted that they will be taking down an existing barn and some questionable trees – some appear very unhealthy.

Chris Tait, noted that they are proposing to provide 4 ADA standard parking spaces. He reviewed the utility plan for the site. In response to a question, he noted that the mechanical room will be in the southwest corner of the building. A sewer lift station will be required and installed – maintained by the property owner. Lighting will be provided in the parking area using bollards. He reviewed the lighting plan and photometric analysis.

While the Stormwater Management Plan will be reviewed in detail on February 29<sup>th</sup>, Chris Tait briefly described the proposed plan. He noted that the plan mitigates against increases in peak flows. There are no wetlands on the site impacted by this project. They have attempted to improve conditions for the nearest neighbor.

Mr. Harris explained that this is a Minor Site Plan Review under the Board's rules since this is an exempt use and the proposed building is over 300 feet from the nearest residential dwelling off site.

Ms. Fantini noted the existing trees and inquired about the proposed outdoor lighting. Derek Noble described the lighting plan as having 12 foot high poles with LED lights which are focused downward.

Mr. Cavanaugh queried about the proposed driveway and the existing drive. Chris Tait stated that the new drive will come off the existing drive so there is not a new curb cut on Woodbridge Street.

Ms. O'Brien asked about the width of the new drive relative to the existing drive. Derek Noble stated that the new drive will be wider.

Mr. Squire inquired as to the type of curbing. Chris Tait stated that the drive will not have curbs – it will be "country" drainage.

Ms. Fantini asked if there are structures under the grass parking. Chris Tait responded that there are not.

Ms. O'Brien queried about the potential use of solar panels. Derek Noble explained why they can't use them in this instance.

Ms. Fantini inquired as to the type of construction. Derek Noble stated it would be wood frame and explained how the acoustics will be better in this new building.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the number of students. Michelle Theroux, Director of the Berkshire Hills Music Academy responded that they have 51 students (of which 21 are residents of the school) and 70 staff. The number of students may increase by 5 students but they do not anticipate any increase in staff.

Mr. Cavanaugh queried if there was adequate parking at the present time. Michelle Theroux stated that there is adequate parking. Mr. Harris noted that there had been a problem with

parking along the access drive as that hampered the emergency response. However, he stated that the Fire District indicated those issues had been resolved.

Derek Noble reviewed the landscaping plan for the site. Mr. Harris noted that, for those who have been to the site, there is a very nice view corridor towards the west from the existing facility and this site plan will maintain that corridor.

Ms. Rosner asked about the 2 year students. Michelle Theroux explained the longer term student programs at the school. She noted that those students are not residents at the school.

Linda Young, 15 Westbrook Road, inquired about the barn that was to be taken down. Michelle Theroux stated that the building was taken down about 1-1/2 years ago and the person had it reconstructed in Haydenville.

Questions were raised as to accessibility. Derek Noble explained the access to different parts of the building.

Mr. Squire asked if there were more questions. There being none, he stated that the Board would continue their review at the next meeting following the public hearing on the Stormwater Management Permit application.

- 5. RATIFY WRITTEN DECISION TO APPROVE: Special Permit – Proposed Multi-family development (conversion of former library) – Orange Park Management, LLC. Property Location: 27 Bardwell Street (Assessor's Map Number #5A - Parcel #24).** Mr. Harris presented a draft of the decision document. He noted that the applicant had reviewed the draft and brought to his attention a typographical error (really it was a cut and paste mistake).

Board members reviewed the draft decision. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the proof of filing provision and Ms. Rosner noted the wording of a sentence which needed to be corrected.

**Motion** – Mr. Cavanaugh moved and Ms. Rosner seconded the motion to approve or ratify the written decision including the findings therein as presented and corrected. The Board voted **Five (5)** out of **Five (5)** members present in favor of the motion.

Mr. Harris suggested that the Board take a brief break to allow him to make the corrections to the decision so the Chair can sign the document and then the Board should consider item #7 since members of MPIC are present. The Board members indicated concurrence.

Upon Mr. Harris return, Mr. Squire signed the written decision as approved by the Board regarding 27 Bardwell Street Special Permit.

- 7. Discussion regarding Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrices Five-Year Priorities**

Mr. Harris stated he did not have the remaining matrices ready. However, he noted that the MPIC has submitted five questions which he felt can be addressed without the work on the matrices being completed.

*What's the mechanism for feedback regarding the five year priorities?*

There was discussion regarding different approaches. Mr. Harris suggested that he would expect the various boards/departments will call or email if they have any feedback – pretty informally.

*Whether any official action or acknowledgement is needed when entities have completed all their Master Plan tasks?*

MPIC representatives noted they do an annual report and questioned whether that is sufficient. The consensus of the Board members was that the Annual Report by MPIC is sufficient.

Related to this question was a question as to whether an entity needed to be “monitored” by MPIC after they have completed their assigned Recommended Actions. It was the consensus that MPIC is just to monitor implementation of the specific Recommended Actions – not an assessment of the entities actions relative to the Master Plan. Accordingly, that is all that should be reviewed. If all of the Recommended Actions have been completed, then no monitoring by MPIC is warranted.

*What is the role of the new Town Committees (such as the Redevelopment Authority)?*

MPIC members and Board members discussed some of the new committees (such as the Tree Committee, Redevelopment Authority, etc.). It was noted that the Redevelopment Authority is generally responsible for the items previously assigned to the Community and Economic Development Committee. There was discussion as to the frequency of meetings and the failure of some committees to function. This led to a discussion of the desirability of some committees to dissolve and others to consolidate together. Mr. Harris noted the Rise of the Falls Facilitation Group as an example of a committee which saw that others were in place to fulfill its purpose and allowed itself to “sunset”.

*Overlapping responsibility – Who appoints a lead entity when there are multiple entities with responsibility?*

MPIC members explained how they saw overlapping entities in numerous Recommended Actions. Mr. Harris indicated he did not see “overlapping” or “duplicating” responsibilities in most cases; rather, he suggested that different entities have different roles in the process. As an example, he noted the Selectboard appoints a Local Historic District Study Committee, but others committees have different roles in the steps to creating a Local Historic District and to obtaining designation as a Certified Local Government. The consensus of the Board’s discussion was that ultimately, the Planning Board, in developing the Master Plan assigns a particular Recommended Action to a particular board, committee or department.

*How do we get an entity to take action?*

Ms. O'Brien suggested that it is ultimately the Town Administrator/Selectboard as the appointing authorities to convince a board or department to take action – to make the Recommended Action a priority.

There was further discussion as to the role of MPIC and how MPIC should present the results of its reviews. It was suggested that MPIC should be clear when an entity has not taken any action on the Recommended Actions and not include a report of all the fine things the entity has done – that is not the role of MPIC.

**6. Discuss Design Review Guidelines for South Hadley Falls Smart Growth District**

Mr. Harris stated that he had provided the State DHCD with proposed wording to change several aspects of the Design Guidelines as the Board had discussed. He received a response that the DHCD would not object to two out of the 3 changes. However, the third change was the most significant and was related to the requirement for upper floors of buildings to be “stepped back”. He suggested that the Board go back to the previous draft of that provision. The Board members indicated they concurred with his recommendation.

**8. Development Update and Planner's Report**

Mr. Harris reviewed the status of various developments and recent Planning Department activities:

*a. Development Report*

- Annafield Estates Subdivision (The District #1 Water Superintendent and the SHEL D Engineer have approved the draft “As-Built” plan but the DPW Superintendent noted some missing or vague data that needs to be corrected/clarified – we are waiting for the surveyor to correct the plan)
- Adam & Eve Subdivision – Apple Road (The District #1 Water Superintendent, DPW Superintendent, and the SHEL D Engineer have approved the draft “As-Built” plan. Therefore, the surveyor and owner need to provide the hard copies along with the Engineer's Certificate of Completion. Release of the Performance Guarantee will be placed on the February 29th agenda)
- One Canal Street (no change)
- Mountainbrook Street Acceptances (Mr. Harris has met with the lender and their attorney regarding Phase 2 and the issue with Phase 1; a principal in the development has also contacted Mr. Harris regarding these matters)
- Rivercrest Condominiums (no change – one foundation has been installed)
- Ethan Circle (no change)
- Mount Holyoke College Dining Hall development project (no change - Application for Site Plan Review and Stormwater Management Permit anticipated to be submitted February 17th with the actual stormwater plan to be received by February 23rd. The initial site plan review meeting is likely to be February 29th but the final review will likely be sometime in March – possible on March 14th depending on the Stormwater Plan and Conservation Commission)
- Stonybrook Commercial Site (Mr. Harris met with Rob Levesque and they reviewed a preliminary concept of a revised site plan. It appears that they can readily revise the project to meet the Town's Zoning Bylaw amendments with minimal increase in cost. Mr. Harris have suggested that we could waive the Site Plan Review application fee –

that is for the Board to decide. If the application is received by February 16 or so, the public hearing will be held March 14th.)

*b. Other Projects*

- Mr. Harris stated he is participating in the effort to update the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan – this plan will qualify the Town for FEMA grants.
- Mount Holyoke College Intern Opportunity (Mr. Harris stated a student intern from the Environmental Sciences department is to undertake some work for us. She will be working approximately 3 hours per week next semester – primarily on a GIS project related to creating shape files necessary to make the online zoning map complete.)
- Mr. Harris is continuing to work on the Permitting Guide and monitor the work on the General Code codification project.
- Trees and Plantings. Mr. Harris stated he provided Mike Lamontagne with Mr. Squire's comments and suggestions. The Tree Committee is to revisit their recommended new list of Trees and Plantings.

*c. Grants*

- Mr. Harris stated that the PVPC has drafted a contract for the Health Impact Assessment project. We need to decide how we wish to proceed on this project. He suggested that a technical committee undertake most of the work. The Board members indicated they concurred with the suggestion.

*d. Workshops/Training Opportunities*

Mr. Harris stated he attended

- “DHCD Downtown Technical Assistance Workshop: Design Guidelines and Lighting in Your Downtown” in Brockton, January 27th.
- “Baystate Roads Program - Complete Streets Workshop” at the PVPC in Springfield, February 10th.

**9. Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice)**

Ms. Rosner noted that Know Your Town is having a program involving many Town committees on February 11, 2016.

Ms. Fantini/ noted that no one has turned in papers for the Planning Board position yet.

**10. Adjournment**

**Motion** – Ms. Rosner moved and Ms. Fantini seconded the motion to adjourn. The Board voted **Five (5)** out of **Five (5)** members present in favor of the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**AS APPROVED**

Richard Harris, Recorder

Attachment A

List of Documents Reviewed in February 10, 2016 Planning Board Meeting

<b><u>Document</u></b>	<b><u>Record Location</u></b>
Planning Board Meeting Agenda and Background Information	Planning Board Agenda Packet Files
Zoning Bylaw	Planning Board Files
South Hadley Master Plan	Planning Board Files
Application submittal and plans and Comments regarding Berkshire Hills Music Academy Expansion	Planning Board Project Files
Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning materials	Planning Board Files
South Hadley Falls Smart Growth District Design Guidelines Draft	Planning Board Files